

## **IV. Quality Management Program**

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality operates a formal Quality Assurance Program<sup>1</sup> and the following section contains the introduction, policy, and management's committee statement directly from the DRAFT strategy.

### **Management and Organization**

#### **Introduction**

The Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is mandated by the state water control law to protect existing high quality state waters and to provide for the restoration of all other state waters. In accordance with this mandate, the DEQ established procedures for investigating, monitoring and scientifically evaluating water quality and water problems.

These procedures were initiated well before the advent of the Federal Clean Water Act (P.L.92-500). With the promulgation of the Clean Water Act and subsequent funding, DEQ's water quality programs were expanded or modified to comply with Clean Water Act Sections such as 104, 106, 208, 303d, 303e, 305b, 314, 316, 604 and the Chesapeake Bay Program.

The purpose of this Quality Management Plan (QMP) is to document management policies, goals, objectives and general procedures by which DEQ intends to produce and validate acceptable water quality data. Implementation of this plan within the various field and laboratory water quality monitoring and measurement program efforts will ensure that decisions made by the agency affecting the state's water quality will be based upon sound professional principles and environmental data of known and acceptable quality.

The QMP defines and describes the quality assurance and quality control policies and responsibilities prescribed by the WQA in accordance with USEPA Order 5360.1."Policy and Program Requirement to Implement the Mandatory Quality Assurance Program", USEPA QA/R-1, "EPA Quality Assurance Requirements for Quality Management Programs", USEPA QA/R-2, "EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans". This document links the management policies, objectives and principals of the program with the procedures described in associated Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPjPs) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which are designed to produce data of known quality. These Policies should guide project managers in the uniform implementation of QA/QC requirements for all monitoring programs.

#### **1. Objectives**

It is the policy of DEQ's Office of Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment that the QA program will assure:

(a) The DEQ Office of Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment (WQMA) Quality Management Plan (QMP) is designed to ensure that all environmental data generated by or for the agency to evaluate and monitor water quality will be scientifically valid, defensible and of documented and adequate quality.

(b) All water quality monitoring activities performed by or under contract for DEQ will have approved quality assurance project plans prior to the start of data collection activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Quality Management Program Plan For The Department Of Environmental Quality, Office Of Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment, Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, DRAFT, 1998.

## **A. Policy**

It is the policy of the DEQ Office of Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment that:

- (a) All environmental data generated by or for DEQ WQA will be of known and acceptable quality sufficient to meet the requirements of the intended use. The data quality information produced will be documented and available.
- (b) All monitoring activities conducted by internal and external sources for the DEQ WQA will have a QA project plan submitted to the quality assurance officer for approval prior to initiation of data collection activities.
- (c) The QA project plan shall describe intended data uses, specific quality assurance activities, level of quality to be obtained and data acceptance criteria for field, laboratory and data management activities.
- (d) A DEQ project manager shall be assigned to each data generating activities and shall be accountable for the development, implementation and evaluation of the quality assurance project plan.
- (e) A quality assurance officer shall be designated as responsible for all quality assurance activities.
- (f) Sufficient resources shall be allocated to ensure that QA activities provide the desired level of quality.

## **B. Quality Assurance Management**

The DEQ WQA recognizes the importance of quality assurance to all aspects of its program and activities. Quality assurance will always be an integral part of the agency's management plan and will receive strong management support. A Quality Assurance Officer has been appointed and assigned accountability for overall WQMA quality assurance program management. The QA Officer is responsible for reviewing, revising and updating the WQM Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPjP) and the WQM Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) manual:

QAPjP -	<a href="#"><u>AMBIENT WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROJECT PLAN</u></a>
SOP -	<a href="#"><u>STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL</u></a>

The Quality Assurance Officer has been provided with staff and resources to develop and implement associated program activities. Individual project managers have been or will be assigned direct accountability for the development of the required project plans and the implementation of associated quality assurance activities.

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